

Air Quality Considerations

Projects contained in the FY 2007-2010 STIP and located in areas designated “nonattainment” or “maintenance” for air quality standards must be consistent with Kentucky’s State Implementation Plan (SIP) developed by the Kentucky Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet’s Division for Air Quality (DAQ) pursuant to the Federal Clean Air Act. Transportation plans involving areas designated as “nonattainment” and “maintenance” are required to be subjected to a SIP conformity analysis to assure that planned projects will not create or contribute to adverse air quality impacts, and will be able to meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) in future years.

In urbanized areas, this conformity analysis is performed during the development and amendment processes of the urbanized area’s long-range transportation plan. If found acceptable in this document, the project list of the shorter-range metropolitan area TIP must also be determined to be a subset of the transportation plan and thus, in conformance with the SIP. STIP projects for rural “nonattainment” and “maintenance” areas must also be evaluated in terms of SIP conformity. All projects are evaluated and a transportation conformity analysis is performed for each area. Once conformity to the SIP has been evaluated, USDOT is able to make a finding for each area and, ultimately, is able to approve the STIP. Additionally, project level conformity must be demonstrated to ensure that the project does not create, or contribute to, an air quality standard violation.

The Kentucky counties of Boyd, Boone, Kenton, Campbell, Jefferson, Bullitt, Oldham, and Christian were all designated as basic “nonattainment” for the 8-hour ozone NAAQS effective June 15, 2004. Christian County has since been redesignated by EPA from “nonattainment” to “attainment with a maintenance plan” status for the 8-hour ozone standard. Additionally, Boyd, a portion of Lawrence, Boone, Kenton, Campbell, Jefferson, and Bullitt Counties were all designated as “nonattainment” for the fine particulate (PM 2.5) NAAQS effective April 5, 2005. A portion of Boyd County is a “nonattainment” area for sulfur dioxide (SO₂). Muhlenberg County is designated as “attainment with a maintenance plan” status for SO₂. As required, regional conformity for ozone and PM 2.5 has been demonstrated for the metropolitan planning areas of Clarksville-Hopkinsville (Christian County), Louisville (Bullitt, Jefferson, and Oldham Counties), Cincinnati-Hamilton (Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties), and Huntington-Ashland (Boyd County). The KYTC has shown conformity for these areas as required by June 15, 2005.

A conformity determination is required for the long-range transportation plans from each of these designated maintenance areas prior to the authorization of any federally-funded projects to ensure that air quality will not be adversely affected (i.e., no increase in carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), or particulate matter (PM)). Currently, all these areas in Kentucky have a conforming long-range plan. The Jefferson County Air Pollution Control District will perform the air quality evaluation of the Jefferson County long-range transportation plan. DAQ evaluates each conformity analysis. USDOT makes the conformity determination. SIP conformity documentation will be incorporated by reference into the STIP as the individual TIP updates are amended into the STIP. (See Appendix A, Exhibit A-4 for air quality conformity letters).